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## **Ocean Protection Council's First Meeting To Highlight California's Action on Oceans and National Leadership**

**Sacramento-** Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman will preside over the first meeting of California's Ocean Protection Council, Monday, March 21 at 9 a.m. The Council, a model for national ocean leadership that includes; Cal/EPA Secretary Alan Lloyd, Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante, chair of the State Lands Commission, and State Senator Sheila Kuehl (D-Santa Monica), will hear expert testimony on ocean and coastal protection in the Byron Sher Auditorium, Cal/EPA Building, Sacramento.

"Today we're taking more steps toward our new approach for protecting our marine environment," said Secretary Chrisman. "This cabinet-level ocean protection council, with the great help of all the people who have come here today, will begin a significant review of our ocean and coastal policy in the hope of improving how we safeguard our spectacular ocean resource."

U. S. Commission on Ocean Policy Chair, Admiral James Watkins (USN Ret.), and Pew Oceans Commission Chair, Leon Panetta are among national experts scheduled to testify.

Governor Schwarzenegger signed the California Ocean Protection Act into law last fall creating the California Ocean Protection Council. The Governor's comments to the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and to the President's Council on Environmental Quality demonstrated that the oceans are in trouble and in need of help. He emphasized that actions must take place at the international, national, state, and local levels, as these issues are just as important globally as they are to the citizen trying to protect the waters off a local beach.

"I applaud your leadership and believe that you are in a unique position to influence ocean policy at the national level," said U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy Chair, Admiral James Watkins, (USN Ret.), "Your progress in implementing laws from recently enacted ocean legislation and in inspiring California's pioneering role in ocean and coastal management is unprecedented."

The Council will help fund, facilitate and improve the protection and management of California's ocean and coastal resources. The Council will ensure California's economic and environmental leadership by addressing the critical issues facing our coast and oceans and through state ocean protection activities.

Chrisman added, "The Council will examine laws designed to protect our oceans, how we evaluate the economic contribution of the sea, our need to establish a research strategy, and organizing California's approach to protecting and managing marine resources, coastal water quality, and even the sand on our beaches."

The Council has completed a draft inventory of all ocean and coastal laws; received preliminary findings on the contribution of the ocean to the state economy; launched a new California ocean information, research, and outreach strategy; and is considering a new action plan to address the needs for watershed protection within the state.

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**Direct simulcast feed:** <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/broadcast/>  
**Additional information:** <http://www.resources.ca.gov/ocean/>